

## **Recidivism for Juvenile Justice Youths**

### **Michigan Department of Human Services**

This study examined recidivism of juvenile justice youths supervised by the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) and released from residential treatment between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2005. The study tracked offenders for varying lengths of time due to differing dates of release grouped by calendar years. Recidivism data was calculated at one year intervals.

Recidivism was defined as a new contact with the criminal justice system following release from the last DHS supervised residential treatment placement. The study used the following definitions of contact:

- New arrest for felony crime in Michigan.
- New conviction for felony crime in Michigan.
- Incarceration with the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Complete information for misdemeanor and status crimes was not available from state data sources. As a result only felony crime data was used.

### **Study Findings**

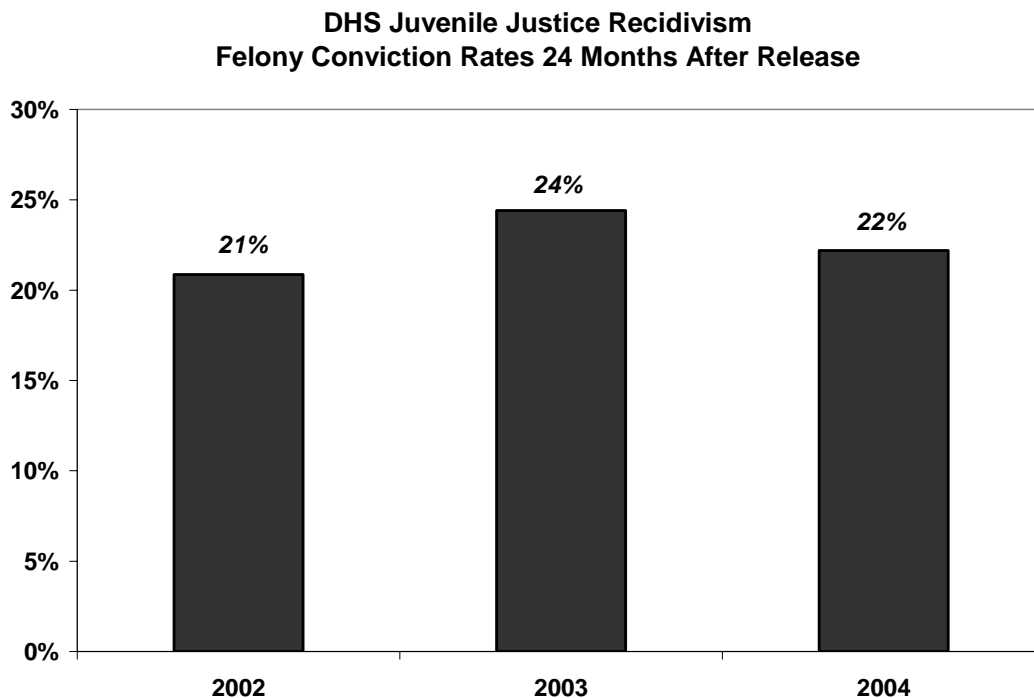
#### **Population Characteristics**

- There were 1,978 (83%) males and 401 (17%) females in the population examined.
- Sixty-two percent (62%) of the youths in the study were white. Youths of other racial groups made up thirty-eight percent (38%) of the study population but only comprised twenty percent (20%) of Michigan's overall population.
- Youths were committed or referred from 70 of Michigan's 83 counties or two tribal courts. The counties with the largest number of released youths were Oakland, Wayne, Macomb, Genesee, Kalamazoo, and Ottawa.
- The study included youths placed at both public and private residential treatment facilities. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of youths had at least one placement at a private-operated residential facility. Seventeen percent (17%) had at least one placement at a public operated facility. Twenty-four percent (24%) had placements in both public and private facilities.
- The study includes at least 500 youths in each study year. Study data shows a continuous decline in the number of juvenile justice youths released from treatment. The number of youths released from their last residential treatment placement declined twenty-four percent (24%) between calendar year 2002 and 2005. The overall number of DHS juvenile justice youths in placement also declined forty-eight percent (48%) during this same period of time.

## General Recidivism

- The recidivism rate as measured by felony conviction was twenty-two percent (22%) at two years after release (See Table 1).

**Table 1.**



- The recidivism rate as measured by felony arrest was thirty-seven percent (37%) at two years after release from the last DHS residential placement.
- The recidivism rate as measured by incarceration with the Michigan Department of Corrections was ten percent (10%) at two years after release.
- Recidivism rates for youths released from privately operated facilities were similar to those for youths released from publicly operated facilities. As measured by felony conviction at 24 months after release, both public and private facilities showed a twenty-three percent (23%) recidivism rate.
- Recidivism was most likely to occur within the first two years after release. Released youths were twice as likely to recidivate in their first or second year after release as they were in their fourth year following release. The longer a released youth remained in the community and free of felony arrest, the less likely it was that this individual would recidivate.

## Recidivism and Demography

- Recidivism rates were higher for minority youths than for white youths. As measured by felony conviction 24 months after release, white youths experienced a recidivism rate of eighteen percent (18%), black youths twenty-five percent (25%), Native American youths nineteen percent (19%) and other racial groups combined fourteen percent (14%) (See Table 2).

**Table 2.**

**Race and Recidivism in Michigan Department of Human Services Juvenile Justice  
Population 2002-2006: Assessment at Two Years Post-release**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Number of Youths</b>	<b>No Felony Recidivism</b>	<b>Any Felony Arrest</b>	<b>Felony Arrest &amp; Conviction</b>	<b>Felony Arrest, Felony Conviction, and Incarceration</b>
White	1,487	66%	34%	18%	7%
Black	752	55%	45%	25%	14%
Native- American	67	70%	30%	19%	3%
Other	76	66%	34%	14%	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,382</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>9%</b>

The racial category of “other” includes Asian-Americans, Pacific Islanders, and youths with more than one race. Youths with an unknown or unspecified race are not included in this table.

- Male youths had a substantially higher recidivism rate than female youths. As measured by felony conviction two years after release, recidivism was twenty-eight percent (28%) for male youths and four percent (4%) for female youths.
- Recidivism rates varied widely by committing county. This was in part due to the very small number of youths committed by many counties. On the average, recidivism rates for large and small counties did not vary greatly. The five most populous counties in Michigan were Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Kent, and Genesee and together these counties made up fifty-one percent (51%) of the state’s population. Recidivism rates for these five counties as measured by felony conviction two years post-release was twenty-one percent (21%), compared with a twenty-two percent (22%) rate for the other 65 counties with released DHS youths.

### **Study Limitations**

This study was not intended to:

- Measure individual program or facility performance.
- Track recidivism for individual youths based only on one specific treatment placement.
- Identify trends in juvenile crimes.
- Identify recidivism trends by gender, race or geographical region.
- Identify effectiveness of reintegration programs.

### **Data Sources**

- Michigan Department of Corrections Census Database via the Department of Human Services Data Warehouse.
- Michigan Department of Human Services Juvenile Justice Online Technology (JJOLT) system.
- Michigan Department of Human Services Service Workers Support System (SWSS) via the Department of Human Services Data Warehouse.
- Michigan Department of State Police Criminal Justice Information Center.
- United States Census Bureau.